



**MAIN LIBRARY
CATAWBA COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
115 West C Street
Newton, NC 28658**

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Former teacher manages St. Stephens branch

HICKORY—When Debbie Hosford received her teaching degree from Lenoir-Rhyne College in 1987, she didn't plan to become a librarian. But after 19 years on the county library staff, she's right at home.



"Libraries support education, so I'm still in the same line of work," she said.

Hosford came to the St. Stephens branch in 2004 by way of the Main Library in Newton and the Southwest Branch. And, after receiving her bachelor's degree, the Newton native went back to school to earn an associate's degree in preschool education in 1990. She then earned a master's degree in library science.

The St. Stephens branch is one of the busiest locations within the county system. Public computers often have wait lists, new fiction—especially inspirational fiction--flies off the shelves and story times are well-attended.

"Patrons feel at home here," she said, adding that the library is a community center with meeting space and reading nooks. "We know many patrons by name."

Opened in 1988 as the county library system's fourth branch, the building was constructed on an award-winning design which makes for a safe, comfortable place for students to settle in to work on papers, research projects and do homework.

Hosford is especially gratified by the fact that newcomers feel relaxed. One illustration: the Spanish-language materials are among the better used materials as Latinos visit the library often for language tutoring and internet access.

The branch serves a healthy cross-section of the community including children, working adults and retirees alike, she said. Audio books are favorites of commuters, those who drive long distances for a living and production workers who listen to books while they work.

A life-long book lover, Hosford prefers character-driven stories. Her favorite authors include James Patterson, Alex Kava and Janet Evanovich, "for fun," she says. In her off hours Hosford enjoys crocheting and spending time with family. She and husband, Dwayne, have one son and one grandson.



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